2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
Taira

tion between couples is not seen in public. Men and women are teased by the community if they are seen standing and talking together. One or several boys teasing a girl would be the boldest advance seen in public. Although, even at night, we never observed couples pairing off in or near the village, we were told that a boy and a girl would arrange private meetings. It is our impression that there is more self-consciousness about love-making than there used to be.

Although there is little occasion for intimacy between a couple during times when other villagers are around, young men and women associate frequently in larger groups during the week in community-wide activities of the Young People's Association. During the many hours which are spent in club meetings, work projects, and other social activities, there is a comraderie between young men and women which effectively neutralizes the formal social distance that is maintained in the traditionally separate seating arrangements. There is, nevertheless, a certain embarrassment and almost clumsy behavior of young men toward the better poised and adroit girls, at least in the presence of strangers like ourselves.

Young men may seek intimacies with girls of other villages, but in doing so they risk the ire of the young men there. It is also possible that a Taira girl agrees to an intimate relationship with someone in another village where she may feel safer from detection. Young men are more likely to seek a girl with whom an arrangement for a meeting away from her home can be made. The girl, of course, suffers public disapproval if the couple is detected, while a man is not subject to the same criticism. In contrast to girls, men have many more opportunities for sexual relationships without public censure.

Sexual attraction does not seem decisive in selecting a mate for marriage, although beauty is appreciated in a woman with long, black hair, a dark arched eyebrow, fair skin, a prominent nose, small mouth, and large eyes. Younger people are beginning to adopt some of the American standards of beauty, which are introduced through movies and magazines via Japan. Although the concept of romantic love is gaining in popularity, arranged marriages still outnumber love marriages in Taira. Even if a young man and woman reach an agreement about marriage, there follows a formal arrangement by their parents with the help of go-betweens, a trusted neighbor or a friendly couple, or a person who commands status and respect. If a man or his family are interested in arranging a marriage with a girl, the go-between notifies her family. Eventually word will reach the girl. If the suitor has not previously indicated his interest to the girl, she may voice her feelings and wishes to her mother, father, or to some other relative. If

2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
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cash income, earned by several adult members in joint work, or equal to about one half of a teacher's monthly salary. The girl brings a dowry consisting of furniture, household utensils, and other things, so, as one person said, the groom is repaid in one form or another. In former times the men had to pay a fine to the parents of the bride if she married out of the village (Suttles, personal communication; Tamura, 1927 translation:44).

Even under present conditions the wedding ceremony is colorful compared to most other private ceremonies. All guests attend in their best clothes and the bride wears a special kimono and a special wig hair dress. She is seated next to the groom, who wears Western-style clothes instead of the traditional silk kimono. The whole ceremony is presided over by the go-betweens. While preliminaries take place, the bride sits almost motionless. Her face expresses what Glacken describes as "undescribable gloom" (1955:218). This continues even through the climax of the event, the ceremonial exchange of wine which symbolizes the union of the participants. During this part of the ceremony the guests, who have been enjoying food and sake and talking amicably, give this moment a solemn meaning by their silence. Speeches by the go-between and other notables follow. The virtue of the bride and her family and of the groom are told and acknowledged by a thank-you address by the groom. Parents of the couple sit close to them but have no other function than to accept congratulations. The bride then goes around introducing herself to the guests.

Children are not present at this event. They line up outside the house and peek through openings to see the bride and watch the guests, who start dances as soon as good food and wine take effect. After the formal part of the wedding, the feast ends like any such event in the village—with great gaiety. The bride acts as hostess; she changes from her kimono and heavy hair dress into more suitable clothes and sees that the guests are well taken care of. The length of this feast depends, of course, on how much food and drink the family is able to provide. Finally, when all guests have left, the bride and groom retire to the bedroom which has been reserved for them, sometimes furnished with one or two pieces, a chest of drawers or a Western-style closet supplied by the bride's family. The bride also provides the comforter for the marriage bed. Friends of the groom may play a prank and replace the normal-sized comforter with a small one, "so that the marriage is consumated quicker," as they say.

Sexual relations between husband and wife are not discussed in public except in jocular references. In spite of the intimacy of household members in the confinement of a small house, one attempts to

831 keep others from noticing sex activities. Keeping sex a private matter
833 does not mean that there is a feeling of shame or guilt. It is considered a natural function, and although they do not discuss marital relations, men feel free to mention sex and its pleasurable aspects. Such conversations seem to cause some embarrassment among the younger women but are thought entertaining by older ones.

To men, sex, like food and drink, is to be enjoyed and indulged in. Women, too, enjoy sex but are more reticent and give much less overt expression to their desires. There are stories about women who are sexually aggressive, but they are either characters in the folklore or women of a neighboring village who are said to be this way "because they don't work hard enough." Men enjoy sex activity until an advanced age. One man over 60 whose wife had long been dead twice took a young woman as second wife; in both cases the women left him after a short period, but dissatisfaction with his sexual capacity was supposedly not the cause. Several children in Taira were fathered by
[278] men who had passed their sixtieth birthday. People believe that potency depends on physical well-being and age, but that it can be
[262] produced by a special drink consisting of sake in which a poisonous
[273] snake, the *habu*, is steeped. As soon as one finishes drinking this brew, its effects should be felt. Sake, meat, and eggs are also thought to increase potency.

833 Women's breasts are considered sexually stimulating. Men like to caress the breasts and the skin in general. Kissing occurs during foreplay only among some younger couples; older people do not care for it. In a room or house, shared with others, few couples undress fully for intercourse. Moving the baby to one side of the mat or mattress, a husband joins his wife.

834 There are no pre- or postparturition taboos; relations continue
[843] throughout pregnancy and are resumed about a week after childbirth,
[846] when the wife has taken her first bath. Men tend to disregard the public health nurse's urging that women be given a little longer rest.

837 That extra marital affairs do occur is evidenced by the presence of
848 illegitimate children. But the mothers are likely to be widows or girls
732 who for one reason or another did not get married at the usual age. Deformity may be a reason for not finding a husband. Two children
[835] in Taira were claimed to be the issue of an incestuous relationship
[581] between a man and his widowed daughter. Although the children were conceived and born outside the village, people became suspicious after the family returned to Taira. Because the putative father failed to deny paternity strongly, villagers felt certain that their suspicions

574 for their special skills on the samisen (a three-stringed banjolike in-
533 strument covered with snake hide), open the singing and dancing with
[534] the first, traditional song, *Kagiyadefu*, a solemn and slow piece which
574 is rendered in the forced, nasal voice peculiar to Okinawan song. Im-
535 mediately after this, the tempo changes, the music takes a fast, stirring
beat, and the first dancer, a man, gets up. Dances at social events can
be performed by a single man or a woman, or by several dancers of
either sex, but traditional group dances are done by women only. Taira
people like to dance some of the many Okinawan dances in which a
story, sung by the vocalists, is acted out. For example, a popular dance
deals with a fisherman and his catch. A hat, hastily put on, and a basket
under the arm suggest the role of the dancer, his body and hand move-
ments the actions. No one is much concerned with accurate or highly
artistic rendition of these familiar dances; many performances become
simply improvisations in which one male dancer is joined by other men
or women who, dancing freely, add their own versions to established
movements. There is much applause and laughter from the audience
around the dance floor, which sings and animatedly claps hands in
rhythm to the music. As all, men and older women, imbibe more sake,
they become gayer, and more talents are unleashed. Amusing presenta-
● [831] tions of a husband and wife, in which sometimes aggression and sexual
interaction are acted out playfully, are received with great hilarity by
the audience. If such a suggestive performance is given by an old
woman and a young man, it seems to appear even funnier. As they get
tired, dancers leave the floor, making room for others.

[562] Not everybody participates with equal lack of restraint. Younger
[273] women do not drink sake and show much more inhibition; they dance
established versions of Okinawan dances in group performances if
called on, usually before the merrymakers take over. Often a mother,
young child in arm, cannot resist. Passing the infant to a relative or a
girl sitting nearby, she joins other dancers and becomes carried away
by the spirit of the event. On one occasion a young woman, seeing her
aged mother display her talents on the dance floor in comical move-
ments to the delight of everybody, angrily demanded that she come
home right away, only to be rejoined with a taunting remark by the
old lady, who defiantly swallowed some more sake and continued her
entertainment.

527 Not a single event that we attended was marred by any serious un-
273 pleasantness. No guest was ever seen to become sick, although some
578 men drank themselves into a stupor. Here and there a paper screen may
574 be broken as a result of a tumbling body, or a hard bang against a
thin panel may set the house shaking. But the end of such a feast

832 Sexual Relations and Prostitution. A married couple engage in sexual relations only when they are sure that they will be neither observed nor heard. If they have children they can have relations only after the children have fallen asleep and can be safely pushed to one side. The children are told nothing of the nature of sex and it is assumed that they are unaware of their [831] parents' relations. A married woman is expected to have relations with her husband only and at his pleasure. There are evidently no tabued positions or times, except for the period of menstruation. Relations may continue through [837] pregnancy and be resumed shortly after childbirth. The husband, however, may have relations with other women.

831 In spite of the secrecy regarding sex and the restrictions imposed upon women, at least women with husbands, there is no feeling of guilt connected with sex as is often the case in American society. Sex is regarded as a natural function. The feeling is probably more that it should be restricted for the good of society. Children should not know about it because, being foolish, they might try to imitate their elders; this seems to be a real fear. A man ought not to tolerate his wife's having relations with another. But he is free to enjoy the pleasures of sex as his means allows. If he can afford it he may go to the jurinuyaa or keep a mistress. His wife may become jealous, but she would be ashamed to become angry or scold him solely because of jealousy. The only valid argument that a wife may use against her husband's having relations with other women is that it costs money.

834 In public there is no demonstration of affection between husband and wife or between lovers. Behavior in public suggestive of sexual relations, such as kissing or embracing, is appropriate only at a brothel. I have seen very young couples walking hand in hand, but this is said to be a very recent development.

831 522 But there is considerable talk about sex, particularly joking, sometimes using metaphors, and sometimes in plainer language. This joking takes place most frequently at parties, but they may be in the home and in the presence of children, who are not expected to understand. These jokes do not involve married women. The relationships implied by the joking are between men and juri. An instance occurred at a gathering that consisted of relatives and one or two friends of the second son. After an hour or so of drinking the second son seized the 'shamisen' and sang a bit and then shouted, "I am --- Second Son. I am the best shamisen player. I am the best singer. I am the one who goes to the jurinuyaa the most." Everyone laughed, including the man's wife, who sat opposite with their children. Later I asked a member of the family if this boast had not made the wife feel uncomfortable. I was told that it probably did not, since there was no basis to the claim (though it turned out later that Second Son had been carrying on a secret affair with a married woman). But the informant admitted that a joke about the wife's having extramarital relations would not be funny, because it would be unlikely; the humor must lie in the possibility that the joke is the truth.

Another example occurred at the home of an older man whom my assistant and I tried to interview one evening. We were the only guests, but he

called for 'awamori'. After a few drinks he asked in a fairly serious manner, 931 522
"Have you bought a woman yet during your stay? You really ought to try an Okinawan woman before you go." His daughter-in-law and two half-grown sons looked on in amusement. The question is not uncommon; on another occasion it was, "Have you tasted Okinawan women?"

In common talk, and perhaps in feeling, sex seems to be identified al- 548 831
most wholly with prostitution and the sex act with the hiring of a juri. The sight of a seed boar being led across a field evoked the comment, "That pig's a man; he's on his way to buy a woman." Perhaps the above statement should be narrowed down to something like: the pleasurable aspects of sex are identified with prostitution. And sexual pleasure, like the pleasures of eating and drinking, singing and dancing, is something that guests may be treated to. (Hence the concern that the visitor sample all the pleasures that Okinawa offers and a pride in those for which it is famous.) In view of the fact that children grow up hearing about juri and juriuuyaa and associating them with other pleasures before they have any notion of their sexual functions, it is not surprising that when they become adults they display attitudes that are different from those found among Americans.

Before the war in the Tsuji district of Naha there were about three thousand juri.[1] The district was the center of the social life of the men [505] of the upper classes. Business men, government officials, and teachers were entertained there. No doubt all did not "buy" juri, but sex was one of the principal commodities dispensed there. Also it is unlikely that the average farmer ever went there, but the indications are that he would have if he could have. A man is expected to want these things if he can afford them. The [184] values of the farmer are not likely to be very different from those of the better-off city man. The juriuuyaa has played an important role in Okinawa society in the past and is not likely to disappear very soon.

Maturity and Old Age: Associations Men may continue to belong to the 575 'Seinenkai' until thirty; women drop 562 out at marriage. The reason that men stay longer may be to give greater continuity to the organization and to provide older members as leaders, but in view of the recreational activities of the organization it seems as likely that the rule is merely a part of the general tendency to give more freedom to men and more responsibility to women.

Adult Associations ('Seijinkai') are said to exist in some villages 575 but are not of any great importance. Associations formed by persons of the same age ('dōnenkai') also exist. In Japan such organizations are often composed of persons who were in the same class in school[2]; on Okinawa the number [171] of older persons who attended school probably does not permit the formation of very large associations. The tendency among younger persons is not very noticeabe. Younger men may organize 'shōbōkai', volunteer fire brigades; such [368] an organization patrolled the streets of Ishikawa nightly. We did not see any evidence of the persistence of any organizations based on former military [179] service; the Japanese Army Reservists' Association may never have been very active on Okinawa.

1 Yanagida, 1951, p. 309.

2 Embree, 1939, p. 163ff.

192 any kind of body dirt or excretion, as mii-kusu, "sleep" in the eyes, haa-
[578] kusu, "stains on the teeth". As in Japanese it is used also in cursing; in
777 anger an Okinawan may say, "I'll make you eat feces." A similar phrase,
[773] kusu takkwee, "eat feces", is often spoken after someone, especially a baby, sneezes. It is explained that the custom arose when a person once overheard two ghosts plotting to steal a baby's soul (mabui), which may be easily detached by a sneeze; one of the ghosts revealed that if a living person spoke the phrase it would be sufficient to drive him away. The fact that the phrase is used in anger suggests that it is an undesirable one; that it is used in the case of sneezing probably demonstrates the greater fear of ghosts.

● 831 Sex Practices and attitudes related to marriage have been discussed under that heading in Chapter V. The sex drive seems to be regarded as
864 natural and not sinful. Adults playfully tweak the penises of little boys and may put little children of both sexes to sleep by prolonged patting of the buttocks. They do not tell their children about the nature of sex and expect them not to know, yet the children hear much thinly-disguised discussion of sexual relationships and, sleeping with their parents as they do, may be vaguely aware of their parents' relations. Parents expect their children to learn of sex "naturally" as they grow older. As Maloney reports[1],
[839] there is little masturbation among small children, but two of Pitts' informants reported that adolescent boys sometimes hold masturbation contests to see who can ejaculate the fastest. This practice is said to stop with the beginning of heterosexual activity.

836 Formerly adolescents, except for girls of the gentry class, seem
883 to have had some sexual freedom. The practice of meeting in the fields at
178 night for parties, moo-ashibii, often led to sexual relations. According to informants in one community syphilis was brought in late in the last century through moo-ashibii with the youths of a neighboring village. Pre-marital sexual relations are probably frequent today, though the conditions under which young people meet are changing.

837 Married women are expected to have relations with only their hus-
548 bands, but married men are, in theory, limited only by their finances. There exists in the larger towns a relatively large class of women called juri, who function as both entertainers and prostitutes. (There is no distinction, like the Japanese distinction between 'geisha' and 'jorō'.) The
[178] Jurinuyaa, "juri houses", were formerly centers of social life for the men of the city. The present 'ryōtei' have much the same function. A group of men may spend an evening there eating and drinking and being entertained by dancing and singing. If one chooses to remain and "buy a woman" his wife's only objection to it can be that it costs more money.

838 Homosexuality is evidently rare, but not unknown. A Naha woman reported that a Japanese who lived in a room next to hers was in the habit of luring young boys into his room with good food and then seducing them, sometimes to their physical discomfort. She said that some of the neighbors

1 Maloney, 1945, p. 392.

464 usually people tend to regard these persons as fortunate. During the entire
562 course of the author's stay on Okinawa he heard no sharp criticism of men who
829 were in military employment, yet many statements were heard about women who were so employed. This dichotomy seems to stem from the widely held belief that the American employers have sexual access to these women, particularly
• [831] the maids. Okinawan culture affords its males a high degree of sexual freedom, but not its females.

464 It is said that the women who are employed by the military are cate-
554 gorized into several grades; the highest status is accorded to the office workers and PX clerks. These are followed by the kitchen and table maids, after which comes the maids who are employed in the dependent housing units; lastly there are the barracks maids, including those of the bachelor officers' and civilians' quarters. It is also claimed that these women can be distinguished on the basis of their dress. Supposedly the office workers and
[291] PX girls dress in the fashion of Japanese business women, whereas the housing
[117] and barracks maids dress in American styles which are considered loud and flashy.

464 It is claimed that many young men will not marry women who have been
591 maids in military installations. One young man asserted that these women were
582 no better than the "honeys" (a term used by Okinawans and GI's to designate the soldier's mistress).

464 The low status and pay (¥1200-1800, or $10-15 per month) for maids is
466 offset to a large extent by the gifts, food, and in many cases board which
[465] they receive from their employers. Despite the stigma there is no shortage
[515] of applicants for these jobs. Another factor is the free bathing privileges which ordinarily accompany these jobs. Very few Okinawan homes have a bath, and public baths cost the equivalent of ten cents in American money, a sizeable outlay for the Okinawan purse.

464 Most of the discrimination is directly attributable to the sexual
554 jealousy of the Okinawan male toward the women who work and often live in
829 close daily contact with Americans. There also seems to be some discrimination against any women in the category of maid, whether employed by American or Okinawan; in the past these were often indentured servants who had been sold by their parents into this low status.

186 Okinawan Attitudes toward Their American Employers It was the author's im-
829 pression that even those who had worked in close daily contact with Americans for a considerable period of time shared much the same stereotypes of the American as those held by the general public. It must be remembered that the points of emphasis in any stereotype are often those traits which seem obvious because they are so unfamiliar and hence not understood by the person of a different culture. Secondly, in every stereotype there is undoubtedly some considerable measure of truth; the important factor is the base of reference. Both Americans and Okinawans judge one another on the basis of different values and cultural backgrounds.